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BULLETIN

OF THE

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

(Entered as Second-class matter, Jan. 25, 1907, at the Post-office, Boston, Mass.,
under the Act of July 16, 1894)

Vol. 1, No. 2

BOSTON, MASS.

MARCH, 1907

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MAN-A-MONTH VOLUNTEERS

MELVIL DEWEY

EVERY intelligent member has a distinct duty to the A. L. A. for 1907. Mr Lane in our last number urged all to read our *Bulletin* and thus keep informed of what the A. L. A. has done, is doing and is going to do. That will give you faith; but faith without works is dead. We have lived, worked and hoped for thirty years, or a full generation. Now, larger and better things are just ahead. In 1876 librarians were, like the conies, feeble folk. Our first conference was a bibliothecal John the Baptist crying in Philadelphia, and our field was in Locust street and Wissahickon. Some of us dreamed dreams and saw visions, and the wisest thought us prophets and the foolish called us cranks, but with an eye single to the highest public good, we faithfully pressed on. At the close of thirty years we should inventory results.

The small beginnings based on mustard seed faith have grown from the little shrub to a great tree and now certain fowls of the air incline to roost in its branches. Some are useful birds, but some will bear watching and a vigorous "shoo." But the best ship accumulates some barnacles and the noblest trees some fungous growths which should be lopped off.

No one questions that modern librarianship has become a world movement. It has won its place as a profession. Its national, state and local associations, training schools, state departments and commissions, liberal appropriations favoring legislation, unparalleled gifts and universal public commendation have placed it side by side with the public school system. In this wonderful work among all civil-

ized nations America is the unquestioned leader, and her work has been mostly done by the A. L. A. Its record should command heartiest support not only of its members but of the public. When we dreamed great things and those of limited vision called us crazy, we have comforted ourselves with Longfellow's Keramos, "Divine insanity of noble minds that never falters or abates, but labors and endures and waits, till all that it foresees it finds, and what it can not find, creates." We have been guided by the Fabians society's wise motto, "For the right moment you must wait most patiently as Fabius did when warring against Hannibal, though many censured his delays. But when the right moment comes you must strike hard, else your waiting will have been in vain and fruitless." We have been patient and persistent. We have worked and waited. With 1907 the right moment has come when we must strike hard. Few of those who have lived and shared in it fully realize what this quiet and steady growth has brought us. Some one farther away in time will get a better perspective. Who hath eyes so keen and strong that he has seen *when* the acorn became an oak? Thus the library movement has won its high place by slow, steady, constant growth, till we stand in awe before its almost limitless possibilities for good. Those who look deepest see more in the future than in the past. We are proud of what has been done, but we are responsible for what is to be. To whom much is given, of him much will be required. When we add new power and labor-saving machinery, our factories must turn out greater products, unless some one neglects plain duty and opportunity.

We have waited thirty years for our official *Bulletin* and for our own official home in national library headquarters. Our membership has grown twenty-fold, and yet includes not more than one in a hundred who would be keenly interested in our work, could he see it with our eyes and understand its infinite usefulness. The present duty is to enroll as many as possible of this ninety and nine, for this is the field of largest promise.

Each member will hereafter receive our bulletins, with frequent messages of progress and encouragement. They will keep his interest alive instead of letting it die down for lack of fuel or be crowded out by causes with more active promoters. Could we inspire every member with one-tenth the zeal of the men who build up commercial, industrial, political, financial or social successes, 1907 would be a red-letter year in library history.

Have we in our two thousand members one who could not with a little effort and time enlist one new member each month from now till the Asheville meeting? That would mean ten thousand members, each a center to be influenced and to influence. This is not an iridescent dream. We can attain it if each will try. For one who fails to make his quota, others will make up, if all canvass the circle of acquaintance thoroughly. We have no right to rest on our laurels or to stop our vigorous growth. The A. L. A. is like a tree, when it ceases to grow it begins to rot. Can any member claim to have the real library spirit and yet be unwilling to make this effort for a cause without a peer in educational and philanthropic promise?

Let us have an honor roll of those who really give this much-needed support in bringing to the highest efficiency these new great agencies which we have started on a small scale, but with large faith. Encourage Headquarters by sending a card saying, "Enroll me in the man-a-month volunteers." If half the men you secure are women, so much the better for the cause to which woman has contributed much more than her half. Then at Asheville let the secretary read the names for honorable discharge of those who have found at least one each month willing to join in the splendid work which has made the A. L. A. famous and is destined to carry its banner to still higher peaks of achievement.

Notes from Headquarters

The first issue of the *Bulletin of the American library association* carried an appeal to its membership asking that time be given to its complete and careful reading. It was hoped that even those whose habit it is to either destroy or lay aside a circular would at least give the time to reading the initial number of an official periodical of *their own* association.

Membership within an association carries with it certain obligations and duties. An important one is the keeping in touch with what the administration of such an association is trying to do for the benefit of its members. Many evidences, unfortunately, have reached Headquarters that the appeal for careful reading has been ignored, several members having written that they had no time for reading bulletins, circulars and literature of like description. Are not our members willing to hold up the hands of the officers to whom they have consigned the administration of their affairs?

The effort to secure payment of the annual dues without incurring the expense of additional printing and increased postage has met with a good measure of success. Two members, when sending their dues, have criticized this innovation as being unbusiness-like and undignified. Many, however, have given their unqualified and hearty approval to this effort to minimize the expenses of the Association. It is hoped that the majority of the members have the welfare of the Association so much at heart that they will be willing to

support its officers in their efforts to manage its affairs economically and with prudence. Those, therefore, who have not as yet sent in their annual dues are again asked to forward a money order or draft on either New York or Boston to the order of the American Library Association for \$2.00, if for an individual, or for \$5.00, if in payment of a library membership, addressed to the A. L. A., No 34 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass. Kindly attend to this *at once*, so that your name may be on the mailing list to receive further issues of the *Bulletin*, conference announcements and other A. L. A. literature.

Museum

It is earnestly desired that all librarians, members of the A. L. A., who have not already done so, shall send to Headquarters, No 34 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass., a sample collection, *in duplicate*, of all printed matter having to do with the administration of the libraries under their charge, with notes, if necessary, for their proper understanding. These collections are asked for in duplicate to the end that it may be possible, upon request, to make up a collection to send to library schools, library commissions, library associations and clubs, and to librarians and trustees of newly-organized libraries. While it is highly important that a permanent museum of all library aids, systems and appliances shall be installed at Headquarters, it may well be conceded that a travelling collection or collections would be of more extended benefit to the library